



Policy

QUESTION: NO1

Without a presumption of confidentiality of government decision making and information effective government is impossible. Discuss if you agree with this statement while highlighting Pakistan's experience with Freedom of Information Act.

ANSWER

① Introduction

Right to information
is -the pillar of
democracy

John K. Kennedy

According to John Stuart Mill, in his book 'On Liberty', right to information is one of the themes of democracy. Similarly, presumption of confidentiality of

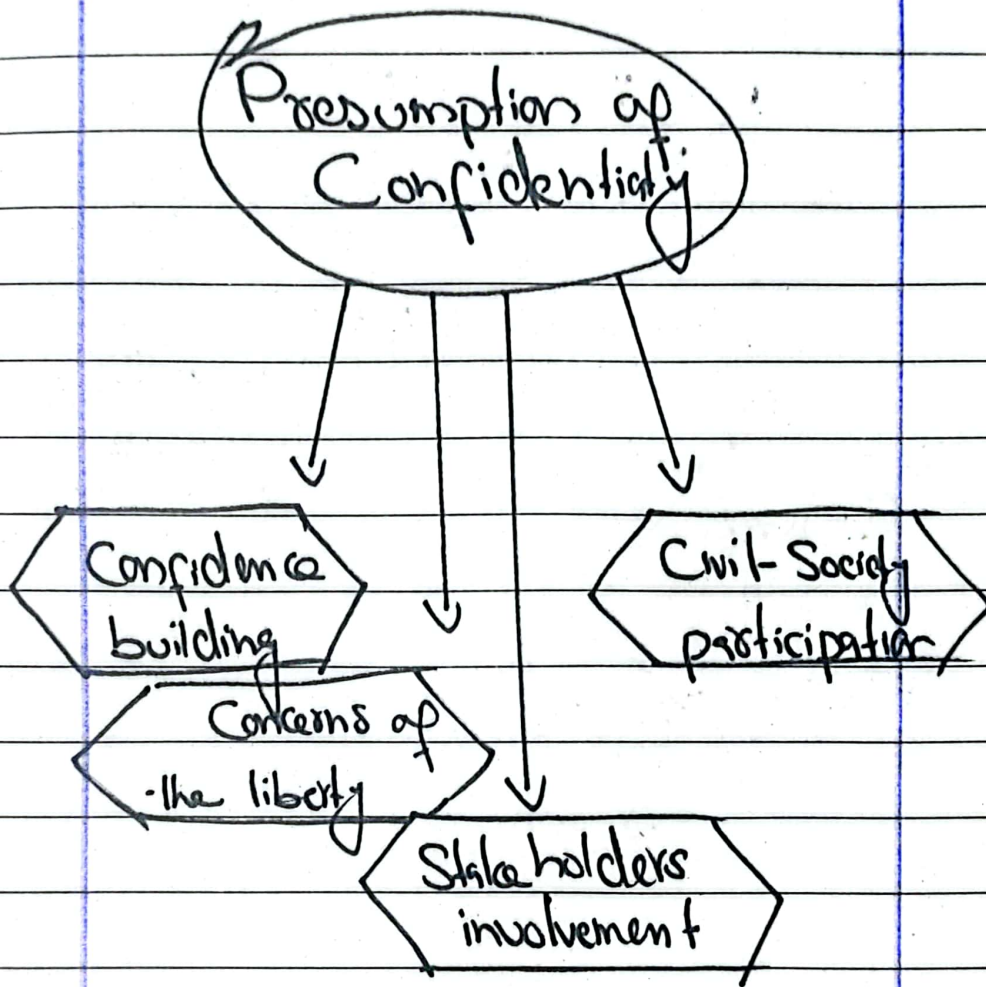


government decision making and information are also main themes of good-governance. Therefore, it is said that without them good governance is impossible. Moreover, - the experience of Pakistan with the Freedom of Information Act has been positive that has strengthened the A-19 of constitution of Pakistan where it is noted as basic right.

② Role of presumption of confidentiality and information in Governance

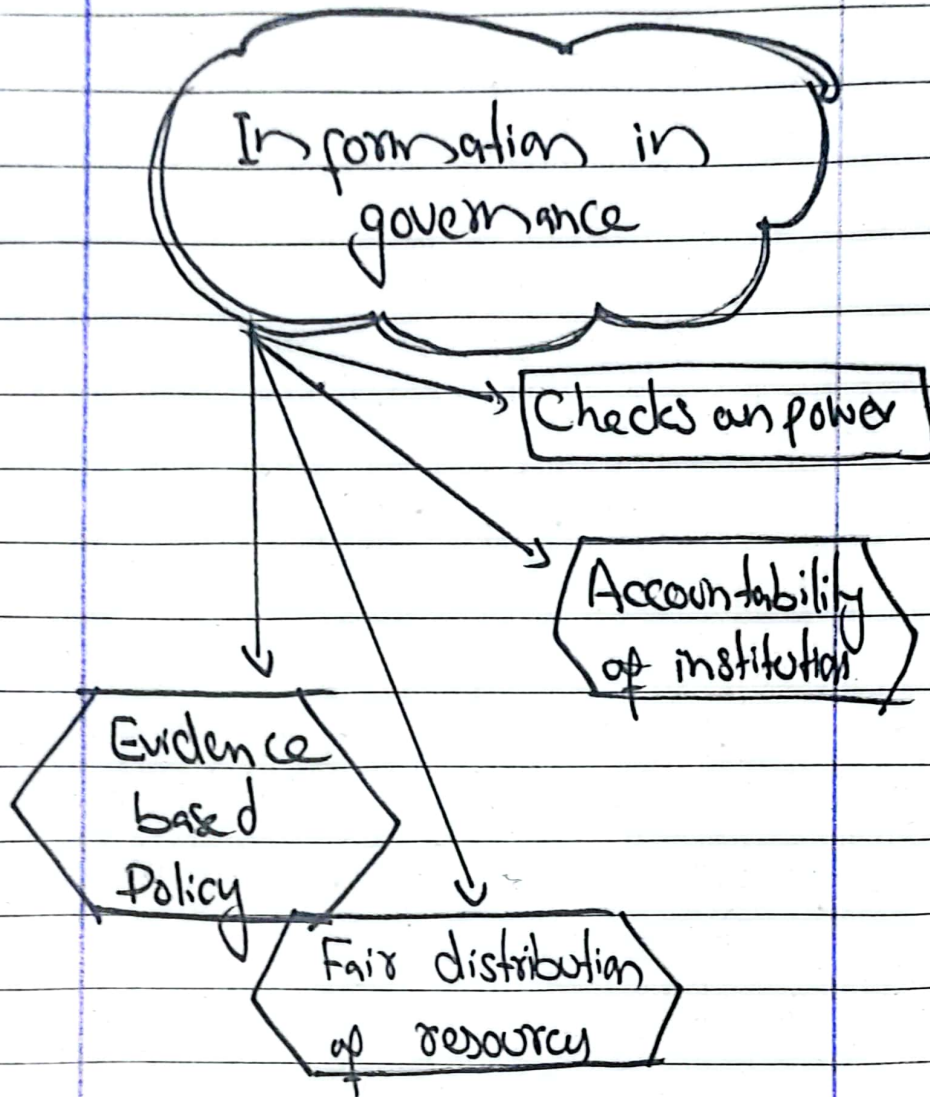
In the book, Governance and Public Administration, it is ~~emphasized~~ accentuated as a basic ingredient of good-governance. Through this method, the confidence building of the stake

holders is achieved. Moreover,
-the concerns regarding lib-
erty of -the masses are
also addressed.



Through this mechanism
-the civil-society and stake
holders are also involved
in -the decision making

process



The role of information varies from type of governance. According to Montesquieu accountability can be achieved through correct information and which is essential for checks and balances.

③

Pakistan's Freedom of Information Act - An overview

According to the Constitution of Pakistan, A-19, is explicitly mentioned for showcasing the right to (the) Information. Pertaining to this, the authorities of Pakistan, announced Freedom of Information act for (all) following constitutional norms.

④

Presumption of Confidentiality and Correct Information is essential for Good Governance and Pakistan's Experience

4.1. Confidence of the stake-holders - a need for successful policy

In the book, Issues in the Economy in Pakistan,

The author has mentioned that Pakistan has never made a prudent economic policy, that was due to lack of information. This act has eroded the obstacles.

4.2- Presumption and prudent Policy making

Akbar S. Zaidi

has also mentioned in his literary works, presumption while policy making has also been missing, that has created troubles in policy making. That is solved through the act.

4.3- Stakeholder involvement - and disseminating right information to the masses

As per Shabbir Zaidi (Former FBR Chairman), stakeholder involvement has



never been achieved in policy making, confidentiality can ensure the correct involvement

4.4. Information and policy implementation - essential for success of policy

According to the Book, 'Pakistan Beyond Crisis', policy implementation has also been a major issue.

The information act has emphasised the masses to participate in the policy implementation process.

4.5. Information and checks on power - an approach ensuring power balance

In the book, Pakistan on Brink, elite capture and institutional imbalance have created governance issues.

The information act will ensure the correct accumulation of wealth.

5) Pakistan's Experience

No	Experience	Positive	Negative
1-	Freedom to know about policies	✓	
2-	Confidence building of stakeholder	✓	
3-	Liberty	✓	
4-	Accountability Right to truth	✓	

6) Conclusion

Prudent policies are evidence based policies in Ishrat Hussain. There is no doubt, without presumption of confidentiality of government decision making and information effective government good governance is impossible. As, it will not strengthen the confidence of masses which is highly discouraged. Pakistan's experience has been positive-